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Literary Designs, May 5, 1939

Moorhead State Teachers College

LITERARY DESIGNS

Supplement To The Western MiSTiC May 5, 1939 Edited by Mu Gamma Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta

The Ulirato

By CONSTANCE HALL

ACROSS the log bridge marked "condemned", and you will find yourself in the land of the Ulirato. It is a forbidden, teasing land, and, once upon a time when I was a run-away tomboy, I escaped into the depths of it every time my mother turned her back on me.

The Ulirato, or crazy man's land as the Finnish call it, is a part of Northern Minnesota wilderness lying fifty miles north of Duluth. It is mostly unpopulated bog and jack pine region intersected by high-banked drainage ditches. The ditch banks are clumped with willow and sumac so as to hide the brazen touch of man, beavers have interrupted the work of the ditches with dams, and the whole country appears to have settled down for another hundred years of isolation. There are a few people there, of course. Occasional lumber camps and scattered Finnish or Polish farmers and trappers may be found.

Night drops suddenly here, so you cannot see much of the peat bog which is behind and to the left of us. Those stark, tall trees which spire out of the bog and end in short, scraggy branches are tamarack. The lower evergreens which lace together and let small patches of dusk-blue sky flower through are the cedar. Catch the resinous tang in the night? That is the cedar. If the swamp were not too full of hummocks for a night expedition, I would love to show you the mosses which grow there, for you could find everything from the damp, spongy kind which may be smooshed into balls and used for target practice, to the silver velvet which blossoms into globules of lemon nectar or red wax flowers, dainty enough for Titania's garden. Then there are white blueberry blossoms hanging in rows on branches like so many tiny, pale lanterns, leatherwood with its glossy, dark leaves lined with brown fuzz, laurel shrubs showering pink or white blossom-cups into the jet ooze, and russet pitcher plants filled with water strangely clear.

There is another swamp just over the long hill straight ahead of us. It has a "corduroy road", that is, a road reinforced with tamarack poles laid horizontally and close together. You will find clumps of high-brush cranberries, balm-of-Giliad trees with bright green, sticky leaves having a medicinal aura, and countless unnamed shrubs. There is nothing unusual in seeing a bristly por-

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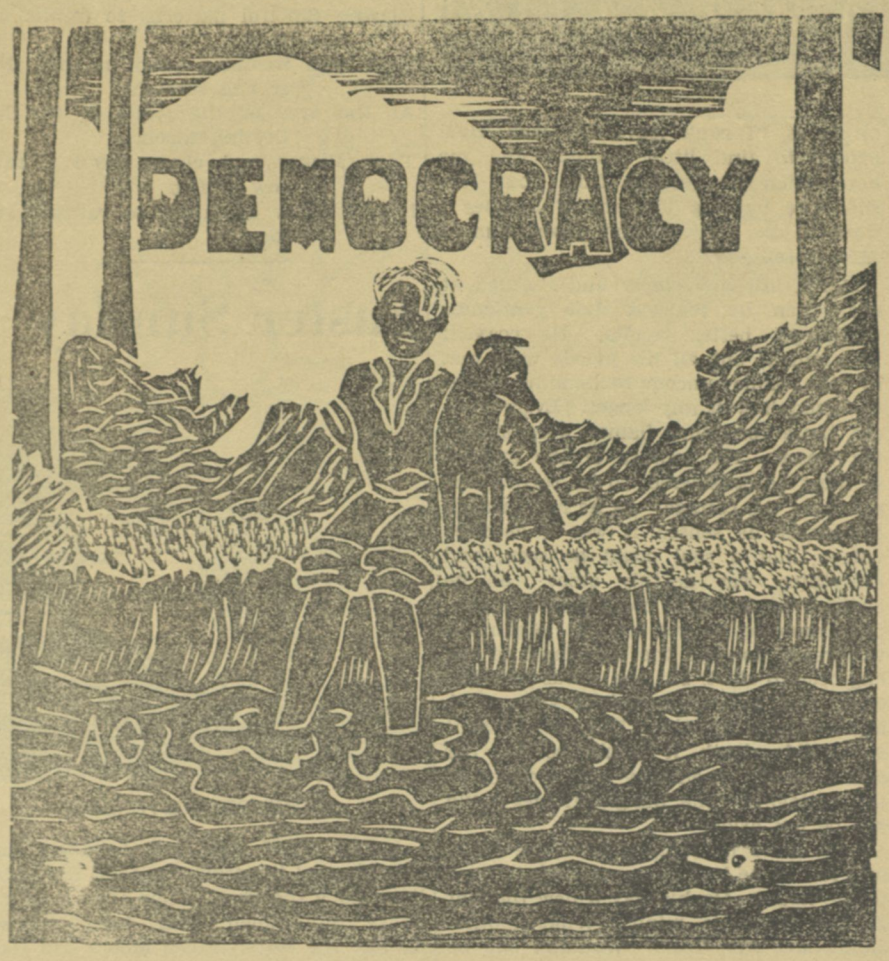

By ART GROVE

Just a boy and a dog, an insep'rable pair,
They wander along with scarcely a care
For the sun that may shine, for the wind that may blow,
For the heat, for the cold, for the rain, for the snow.

Just a boy, we may say—all tousled and red.
Just an old cur dog that most gayly is led
Through a ticket, a tangle, a meadow so wide,
'Till at last they must rest by the blue river's side.

Just a boy and a dog, but that, only at heart
For the two sprightly comrades at last had to part,
For the boy—to go bravely, to fight over sea—
For the dog—to remain here, to die silently.

Chico's Song

By GWEN EASTER

COME, TONI, seeng for da pipples, an' maka dem happy lika you mak me." The jovial deep voice of Chico Pachini reached the ears of little nine year old Toni, who was talking and laughing happily with some Italian bambinos on the street a few steps away.

"Yes, padre—what shall I sing?" Toni skipped to the side of the blind accordianist, who was surrounded by a group of Italians, all talking or laughing animatedly. To the more fortunate people of New York's Italian section, this group signified the "riff-raff" of the streets, but to Chico and Toni they were individuals, real people with problems, heartaches, and joys of their own.

The rabble of noisy voices and spontaneous laughter ceased abruptly as Toni began her song. As the lilting aria of the "Italian Street Song" trilled out from his bambino's throat, Chico's thoughts went back—back nine years ago to that terrible evening. Toni was born then, but Maria, never strong, and yet never weak; Maria, with the voice of a nightingale, had died. Maria and his music had been his life.

"Play for me, Chico", she had said, "sometheeng from da masters — da songs I weel always love." And he had played—yes. But she had never sung again.

But there was Toni—dear little Toni, so small and helpless. He would love her with enough love for the two of them.

Chico's thoughts came to an end as he was brought back to reality with the grand finale of Toni's song.

But there were other things Chico did not know. He did not know that a girl twin had been born with Toni. He did not know because his sister thought it best; one child would be enough trouble for Chico to provide for, she thought, so she would take the other to live with her in Chicago. She could give her a better home and education than she would ever get here. Chico need never know — he would be happier that way. So Chico was never told that he had another daughter with a song in her throat—a daughter so like Toni that the difference was scarcely audible.

The group clamored loudly for another song. Toni sang like her mother had sung: as if all the sweetest singing birds in the world had somehow put their songs in her throat. And Chico played his accordian as an accordian was never played before; the greatest Italian operas gained greater fame as he played

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Elizabeth

By MARGARET MOFFIT

I HAVE called you a thousand times, dear one,
and you answered not.
Will the moon be forever veiled in cloud, and the light
of our love forgot?
Do you harden your heart to the voices of night and
spring and the grass new-grown,
Or is it so still that you do not hear, in the grave
where you lie alone?

Lost: The Story Book Hour

By VIOLET GLASRUD

ONE OF the fondest memories of my childhood is the recollection of the usual "before bed-time story hour" when my two brothers and I listened open-eyed and open-mouthed to mother as she read the allotted chapters of a favorite book. Starting out with the tales of Peter Rabbit and gradually following up with those books which best suited our ages—Little Women, Tom Sawyer, Uncle Tom's Cabin, David Copperfield—ours became a full and varied reading knowledge. Those which impressed us the most favorably were devoured by us later, favorite passages read and read again.

Today, one of the chief joys of my home, the one element which gives me the fullest satisfaction, the greatest pride, is our own home library. Not a large room nor a glamorous one, but to me a beautiful one as the dancing lights of a fast disappearing sun sparkle on the glass doors of the book cases, making glitter the bright-colored covers of the newest books and adding new glory to the old, faded, badly-worn volumes which were our first proud possessions.

Am I overly-sentimental about these—our books? Do they mean too much to me? Sometimes I wonder, as a friend of mine shrugs impatient shoulders as I take time to put into place a misplaced book, or fret about one that cannot be found; or as I watch the perplexed and somewhat disgusted expressions of the woman next door as we move still another book case into an already much-too-crowded room.

Is the love for the reading of good books becoming today a lost art? Are our spacious modern libraries robbing our children of the privilege of building their own libraries? Are the magazine racks pushing out the book cases? I choose to think otherwise. And yet, I sometimes wonder, as my gaze involuntarily searches the walls of many of the homes of today for the cus-

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Dream Child

By VIRGINIA MURRAY

MY HEART is free, an untamed thing.
Oh chain me not with words of love!
I race the swiftest clouds and sing
Sweet muted songs of fawn and dove.
No sighs. But come and run with me
Where treads the silver footed moon.
We'll swim in mists; the tallest tree
We'll climb and dream gay dreams till noon.
And when we wander home once more,
If you conceal a heart that's sad
At closing Fancy's hingeless door,
Then know my love you've always had.

Was It Worth It?

By JANE WEBSTER

A HEAVY mantle of smoke hung over the little town of Baudette. Devouring flames were sweeping over the timber lands of northern Minnesota, leaving blackened charred ruins in their path. At first the inhabitants of the town were not alarmed, because the smoky atmosphere was not uncommon in this vicinity, but when the smoke became so thick it hid the sun, and morning, noon and night all looked alike, they grew very concerned. Men left their homes and families and went out to fight the fast approaching fire.

Early the next morning the tap, tap, tap of the telegraph key called the operator, Joe Malone, to his station. It was a message from the capitol saying that a government relief train would arrive about noon of that day to take the people out of the danger zone. He was to relay the message, and see that there was no delay in their preparations to leave the village.

Word soon flew around the panic stricken little town that a train was coming to their rescue. All morning people kept arriving at the station, and by noon the platform was crowded with an excited mob. They presented a queer, but pathetic picture. Little tots, who didn't realize the graveness of the situation, had their arms full of teddy bears and other favorite toys.

Suddenly the buzz of the crowd was silent. Was that a train whistle they heard in the distance? Again they listened. Yes, it definitely was a train whistle, and in a few minutes a roaring, black engine burst through the curtain of smoke. As the train drew to a stop, people pushed each other in their eagerness to get aboard. Larry March, who was in charge of the train, succeeded in establishing order, and soon everyone was on the train. He was about to give the order for the train to leave when he saw that Joe Malone, the stout, red haired station agent, was frantically motioning to him to wait. "Wait, wait, Mr. March. There is a woman and her baby in that cottage over there, and she refuses to leave. I can't do a thing with her. Says her husband is out fighting the fire."

"Refuses to leave?" It seemed incredible to March anyone could show such poor judgement in a time like this.

"I've tried everything to get her to come, but she won't listen. See what you can do. It's that cottage over there," said Joe, pointing down the street.

March set out on a fast run. There was no time to be lost, as the smoke was getting denser all the time. As he approached the cottage he saw in one hurried glance it had a very inviting appearance. The small, but neat, yard had a picket fence around it, and inside it there were many colorful tulips in full bloom. The house reminded him of the honeymoon cottage popularized by fiction writers of the day. Things like that weren't to be considered now. He burst into the house and the scene which met his eyes aroused all his sympathies. A young woman, hysterically clutching a baby in her arms, was pacing up and down the room. As March entered the pacing stopped, and she regarded him with startled eyes.

Without any explanation March said, "Hurry and get your things together. The train is leaving." The woman, who seemed like a child, so thin, innocent, and worried looking, shook her head. March felt a flood of anger rising. Who was this woman to endanger the lives of a trainload of people because of a foolish sense of loyalty? Yet to this young girl his request seemed unreasonable.

"You must come! Don't you see that to stay here means death? The fire will reach Baudette within a few hours. Hurry now I tell you." Every minute March was growing more disgusted. He was a man who was accustomed to having his commands obeyed instantly.

Finally with a decidedly Polish accent, the woman said in a sudden flood of words, "I can't leave my Jack. He'll expect to find little Tommie and me here when he returns from that terrible fire fighting job, and if he dies I want to die, too. I can't desert him; I can't, I tell you."

March lost his temper and stormed at her; then he realized that gentleness would get better results. He coaxed; he pleaded; but all his moods were met by the same uncomprenhending stare. He couldn't wait any longer. Every minute those terrifying flames were sweeping closer. The welfare of the majority must be considered, so he turned and ran from the cottage. As he ran through the street he sensed it was a deserted village; not a soul could be seen, and everything was deathly quiet. As he boarded the train he could hear the people clamoring to get started. Again he was ready to give the command to the engineer to start, but the words wouldn't come. He saw that faithful young girl, and her helpless baby. Thoughts of what a horrible death it would be for her and the child when they were trapped in the cottage by the hungry flames could not be put aside.

Once more he jumped from the train, and ran as he had never run before, back to the house. On his way a new thought flashed into his mind. What mother didn't love her baby? Wouldn't she be willing to sacrifice a lot for his welware?

Approaching her once more in a very hurried manner he said, "Look here! Suppose your husband doesn't perish in the fire, and finds out you and the baby insisted on remaining here, and your death was caused by your loyalty to him, don't you suppose he would regret the loss the remainder of his life? And if he isn't so fortunate as to escape, he will never know you left the cottage. Do it for the baby's sake!"

At last she was beginning to understand; as she started to gather the baby's things together, and wrap them in a blanket, he realized she had grudgingly consented to go. She left the table set for one, with her husband's favorite sauce and hot rolls, and insisted on leaving everything ready for her lover's return. Mr. March tried to hurry her; when he finally succeeded in getting her outside the house, she fumbled in her apron pocket, pulled out a latch key, and locked the door. Reaching under the step she pulled out a tin cup and placed the key in it. It was evident her hope had not died, and that she expected to return. March wondered why people refused to face the realities of life. Couldn't she see the danger, and that time was a big element in the situation; yet she apparently was in no hurry. They had not gone more than a few steps from the yard when she let out a cry, and started to run for the house. March tried to catch her, but she was out of reach. His heart sank. Had she changed her mind after he had gotten her this far? He saw her reach for the key, unlock the door, and step inside. When she returned, she was carrying a little black box, which he imagined contained the family's savings, but no questions were asked; then they again started on a fast pace for the train. When they reached it, he heaved a sigh of relief, and thought to himself, "I have attained the impossible." March helped her aboard, and found a seat for her in one of the coaches.

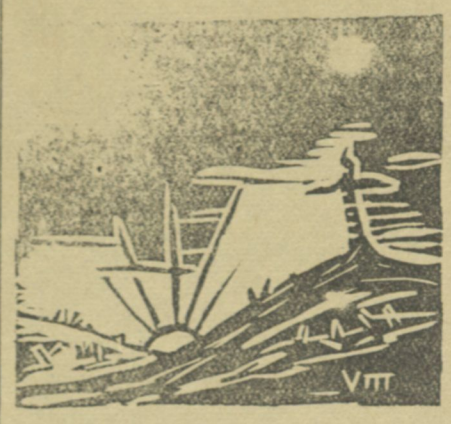
As he turned to leave the car he heard a quick intake of breath, which resembled a repressed cry. He turned to the woman, whose eyes were dilated, and fixed on a person sitting across the aisle, two seats down the row. It was her husband! Her lingo in the native Polish tongue that followed expressed surprise, hatred, and despair. Her husband turned and saw her. In the excitement of his flight from the unbearable heat and smoke, he had forgotten his wife and son, but never could he forget the sight of her holding the baby to her breast, with that look of hopeless misery in her eyes.

Aurora Borealis

By VIRGINIA MURRAY

THE northern lights rage in the deepest sky,
Blazing fanciful patterns so mystic and wild
That man trembles, awed, as they shiver and scratch
At the eyes of the stars, at the low, fleeting moon,
Then flicker and chase down a rainbow of fire
Like a flurry of fairies to vanish . . . too soon.

Easter Sunday



By HENRY STEVENSON

ALL DAY long the Loyalists had hurled themselves against the Rebel lines along the Ebro. Time after time the weary militiamen had been thrown against the better-armed Moors and Italians—in the face of sputtering machine guns, exploding grenades, deadly rifle fire, bursting shells.

And now through the night the intermittent soaring rockets showed no-mans land strewn with corpses, as thick as the wheat that had once grown there. Here and there among the dead were the near dead. They moved or groaned until a Nationalist marksmen would fire, silencing them forever.

In front of us the ground was a jumble mass of grotesque, disfigured trees, among which ran lines of barbed wire, tangled and irregular. One tree stood about thirty yards away from our lines, directly in front of us. It was as grisly a specimen as any of the mangled and bleeding soldiers on the field, (we frequently saw it outlined in the rockets glare) a trunk with but two branches, and these mere stubs that protruded near the top to give it the shape of a cross.

As the first rays of the morning sun began to slant across the fields, the Rebel opened up a brief but terrific artillery barrage. A shell struck close to the tree, exploding with such force that we were blinded momentarily. As sight returned we saw sharply silhouetted in the morning light the body of man, spitted on one of the stubby branches of the tree's rude cross.

Spinster

By VIRGINIA MURRAY

DEFINITELY neat and prim,
She minced her brisk way down the street.
Something impish prompted him
To honk a horn blast at her feet.
Though her glance was icy, grim,
Her thoughts: "Why, men find me a treat!"

Hoar Frost

By MIRIAM MURRAY

OUT OF the dew of the night
It comes
Creeping,
As breath of the eve
Daintily touching
Each bow and twig
As moonbeams
Filter the glade.
Glistening, feathery,
Downy white,
Delicate, lovely,
Enchanting, light,
Fog——
Of a still, cold,
Winter's night.

Our Backyard

By ROSAMOND KELTY

IF EVER we would have to leave our present home, I know that I would miss the backyard more than anything else. Perhaps this is because our backyard is so different from most backyards. It is not just a driveway as many are, but it is spacious, rolling, and sweeping.

It has the ordinary things found in a backyard like a pump, a garage, and a clothesline. But the pump isn't just a rusty one-armed object with a dripping nose; it is tall and very erect with a sound floor bottom. The garage isn't a square box with swinging doors, but it's a reformed old schoolhouse with a belfry and green slats. Our clothesline isn't just a telephone pole contraption, but it's white with a grove of plum trees at one end.

At the foot of the yard lies the rich, black bulk of a garden, whose face is tinged with color during the growing season and powdered with snow in winter. In spring when the plow gnaws into its depths, the air is vaporized with a warm full fragance of the vital earth. Like a cross at the head of a grave, stands a wood beyond the garden. The wood is small and dense with birch and oak, and its border is marked with sumac.

The driveway is an uncoiling snake with a green strip down its back. It is narrow and shadowed by trees that line its sides. Near the edge of the yard is a wall of lilacs whise tips turn indigo in the spring.

At the last curve of the driveway stand two pines. One is lofty and vast and cries with the wind. The other which is low and slender giggles when the wind rattles her needles. Both trees are trimmed to their knees, and there is a patch worn between them.

In the spring the air is heavy with the aromatic pollen of the plum blossoms and the dew on the grass. At night the leaves rustle, and the moon shimmers on the lawn. From early morning to the last rays of daylight, the birds chirp and sing as they fly from tree to post and back to tree. Their song is enticing and joyful.

By autumn the summer suns have baked the leaves crisp, and they are gathered into a pile near the garden. For many days the air is reeking with the dry aroma of burning leaves. A white dog with a black spot over his eye and a chopped off tail sits on the porch step and sniffs at the smoke-filled air.

Now all is buried beneath diamond-studded snow, and the white dog with the chopped-off tail sits by the fire in the house.

The Dreamer

By CLEO SPRINGER

OF SCIENCE
She knew naught
Of Business
Less.

Relations said,
"You really ought
To study
More."

She dreamed
Her only thought
If
Vague.

Others worked
Great knowledge sought
They learned
What?

All died
Then God brought
The dreamer
Home.

To feel alone
To be alone
As if, of a sudden
No more friends
No kind words
Just you alone.

Pearl Buck, You're Right

By OLAF SYLTIE

WHILE addressing a large assemblage of teachers in the East, Pearl Buck made what seemed to me a very startling and breathtaking statement. "Out in the sand dunes of South Dakota," —or words to that effect—she said, "lies the most potential, most fertile literature of our country. But, strangely enough, it is still unrecorded.

Such a declaration fired my thinking and kindled my imagination. A short hour's drive from my home—I had been there often—was the locality to which she was referring. Could there be any truth to what she said? Was that desolate country, barren for miles around, sand-covered hills with long sloping prairies, the fertile haven for an understanding litterateur? If drama were being enacted every day there, the same must be true of the locality near my home. There seemed to be very little that would be of universal appeal at home.

I've been away from it for a while, now. I'm still thinking; the light is beginning to shine through and from a mingled, congested picture outlines are beginning to form and take shape. What once seemed commonplace and very natural is beginning to stand out in bold relief. What appeared to be quite a natural routine is exposing itself, unraveling and opening up new vistas and recreating for me new and exciting experiences out of what I considered anything but the unusual.

Life at times seemed very incomplete at college. Disillusionments mounted higher and higher. Though I did not know it, I was seeking for more deliberate, purposeful experiences and a high seriousness which quite naturally resulted from an early close attachment to the soil. No, don't think we walked around with "ministerial" looks on our faces. Rather, I would venture to say we laughed more heartily, more frequently, and certainly with more surety. But back of it all was that deep seated reserve which adds strength and satisfaction.

Earlier in life everything centered around the soil. We children were forced to assume important responsibilities at an early age. A highly favored duty was that of sitting on the drag-cart behind a four-sectioned machine. This task required very little concentration and wild restrained thoughts were given free leash. Every little thing in nature would awaken a stream of consciousness. There was time to observe the habits and ways of almost every living creature and green leaf to their minutest details. An old rock pile below which was a stagnant spring called forth new worlds of imagination. Several beautiful brown weasels had their home here. Happy was the occasion which caused the need for work near this secluded spot. To prolong these experiences we did an unusually good job of double-dragging or even triple-dragging the field adjacent to it. By means of placing a stick near a peep-hole and waiting patiently for the little creatures to gain confidence in us, we could quickly move the sick, pinning one down so that we could take him in our hands to observe him at a closer range.

But wait! What's happening in the sky? This merits observation! A hawk is bringing home the "bacon". Nearby, the female is setting on her nest. A call pierces the air and she stretches her wings and, bobbing once, plunges into the air like a swimmer into water. Up she soars! Can it be that a battle is brewing? They fly directly at each other; then, instead of a "head on", they begin a parallel climb upward. The stranger soars higher. It's the preparation for a trapeze stunt, but there is no trapeze. Then, with a bow and a kick, as if bargaining for quarter, he hurls the prey to his mate. She makes an abrupt U-turn in mid-air and with perfect timing and exquisite grace clutches the morsel and floats back for her luncheon. And say! the sun is climbing mighty high too; it must be almost time for my luncheon.—Why is that bittern booming and causing such a disturbance at the spring? But there's no time to look into that, now.

These naive and rather meagre illustrations bring out the point I wish to make. The composite, which is man, has integrated with his make-up much of what originally was the sole possession of nature. It has become the stabilizing force of his lift. All is good and well as long as man lives in the long established routine. But let him depart from it. Let him move to an environment where there is not the same force to which he has grown accustomed; where there is nothing to call him back to the same purposeful and necessary objective of life with which he seemed to be born, and the individual begins to feel he has been cast aboard a rudderless ship in a boundless ocean without a compass and a sextant.

"Know then thyself", shouts Pope. "I am the captain of my fate," "The real strength comes from within" flash through the brain. A thought crystalizes and becomes definitely outlined and seems logical. The strength left out there in the soil must be made up for by the strength of "self" as is emphasized so often by Whitman, who lived a philosophy rather than interpreting and explaining one.

Yes, Pearl Buck, you're right; there is literature in those sand dunes. But you have to get away from it to find it. What can prove a more interesting study than a person, who as soon as he leaves home, finds that part of his most important organ, namely the brain, refused to follow him, that part of it is in the north forty, and other parts strewn throughout various parts of the farmstead? Or take the more ordinary situation, where a man or woman lives and dies in those same surroundings. Times of stress and disaster arrive; man's strongest instinct is self preservation. His strength is not in himself alone, but partly in the soil. So, he'll fight to preserve himself and the soil—one and the same. No wonder those settlers refuse to leave their farms. They would as soon give up a few brain cells.

The Country Store

By LAURA SIMONSON

I RECENTLY passed by the little crossroad center near the farm where I was born. There is just a faint suggestion of the activities that once flourished there. In fact, it is so faint that only those who are familiar with the locality and its history would know that those ghost-like remains have once embodied life. In passing, I paused before an old building with boarded windows and sagging roof, and as I contemplated the antiquated ruins poignant memories of early childhood days flashed across my mind. The pinnacle of prosperity of this little community had passed into yesterdays before I opened my eyes upon the world, but enough of its waning glory remained for me to know it had seen a better day. Life at the miniature community center had reached a plateau and was beginning a gradual decline when my day dawned. It is thus I remembered it.

The boarded windows and sagging roof I now beheld were the remains of the somewhat shabby little green and white country store which occupied one of the four corners of the crossroads.

Again, I seemed to see the farmers driving in from the surrounding countryside, stop to tie their horses to the hitching rail; the iron hitching bar upon which the neighborhood children performed their acrobatic stunts, vying with each other in "skinning the cat," somersaulting and inventing miraculous feats of daring.

A car would stop before the old store steps. Forgotten was "the man on the flying trapeze" for here was a stranger from beyond the confines of our little world and we must know why he had come. We follow him into the store and gaze open-mouthed for a while, but not being greatly concerned if the world goes to the dogs if we don't vote the Republican ticket this fall, we turn our eyes almost caressingly for the nth time to look upon that never to be forgotten sandy case. Oh, to think that one small space could hold so much alluring sweetness! Surely, Adam and Eve had never known temptation comparable to this, but hadn't we learned, in the beautiful little church around the corner, thou must not steal! After all one could look elsewhere where temptation would not overtax one's resistance.

All about us were counters and shelves that had been filled to meet the simple needs of the rural community. The shelves and counter on one side of the room were piled with bolts of calico, gingham, overalls, workshirts and various other articles of wearing apparel. The checkered apron mother wore had come from that gray and white bundle there. Mrs. Peterson and Mrs. Myer had liked it so well they had bought some of it too! On the same counter was the show case containing an array of necklaces, bracelets, rings and silver thimbles. I believe I loved it almost better than the candy case! I particularly yearned for the ring with the tiny red stone! There always seemed to be enough to eat and to wear, but prosperity never appeared to reach the point where it might include such luxuries and treasures as the coveted ring. But then —hadn't one learned in the little white church, not only that one must not steal, but neither must one covet?

We turned our eyes from the rings to the shelves of dishes and knick knacks on the opposite side.

The knick knack shelf was subject to seasonal changes. About Thanksgiving time these shelves would be decked with Christmas finery and covered with toys to delight the hearts of young and old. We stood by, admonished "not to touch" and watched the grownups screw and wind and jiggle to their heart's content, hoping that someday we, too, would grow up so we might play with the toys. Along in the last days of February the remnants of toys would be packed away, and bats and balls and straw hats would come to take their place.

In the rear of the store were displayed numerous garden implements, tools and other pieces of hardware. Shelves of groceries, barrels of sugar and coffee bins stood near by. Hanging above them upon the walls and from the ceiling were wash tubs, wash boards, pails, coils of clotheslines, lanterns, bamboo fish poles, halters and almost everything that one could possibly need.

While we had surveyed all these wonders, the hum of conversation had gone on almost unnoticed about us. The Republican candidate had gone. Somehow I hoped that it couldn't be our little world that would be going to the dogs. Different voices had joined the group gathered there. The old lady who lived below the hill had come to buy baking powder and peppermints. She was going to have baking powder biscuits and tomato sauce for supper She left the peppermints with us. One after another the neighbors drifted in with their butter and eggs, and left with their baskets filled with groceries. So the customers came and went, and the loafers chattered on in friendly gossip in the old-fashioned country store.

The little boy we liked the best came to buy a striped stick of candy. With a last longing look at the tiny ring with the wee red stone, we dashed out to have a lick of the candy stick and to play "hide and seek."

My reverie was ended. Again I gazed at the old store, vacant, neglected, bare —hushed and still in the sunlight. It hadn't been just an exchange for groceries, wearing apparel, and hardware. It had been a market place for friendship, love and neighborliness. The gleeful laughter of children and the buzz of friendly voices had died away. So still.

Beyond the corner, the little white church nestled peacefully back among the cottonwood trees. In the quiet cemetery nearby lay a new grave, strewn with beautiful flowers—placed there by the hands of those who had met to chat in the country store. The checkered apron was needed no more.

I turned, and walked away. Only a sparrow chirped in the eaves, and a dried leaf rustled over the weather beaten steps.

Speech Of The Angels

By BEATRICE DRISCOLL

A SHRILL voice down the hall! A radio across the court, the drone of an airplane silenced by an airpocket, a catbird in the nearby lilac!

As I listened to them, I thought, what would the world be without music? Devoid of the harmony of sound, such an essential part of the harmony of life, there would be no cheer in the theater, no rhythm in the dance, nor half the beauty and inspiration in worship. There would be no soft tonal effects to relieve the hideous clang and noise of the streets. If there were no minstrelsy of the birds, silence as heavy as the tomb would brood over the dim woodlands. The fields would not know when to greet the sun at the flash of dawn.

Music plays no favorites. It searches out all nations and peoples, healing, soothing, regenerating. Thomas Carlyle called it the SPEECH OF ANGELS. Its masters come to us as benefactors of the race. When their mission is accomplished, they pass on, leaving us richer and happier for their genius and understanding. Each one has expressed his individuality in his composition and strikes a chord in some spirit attuned to his own

As we sit in our homes or in a concert hall and listen to the rapturous flood of melody rising step by step, we, too, soar and climb. Like a breath from heaven come the full rich tones of Schumann-Heink and Caruso. Everything mean and petty dissolves and disappears for the moment. We are lifted above temporal things, to the land of illusion.

Oh, how close music lies to the human heart! At twilight the mother sings lullablies to her baby, and he drifts away into slumberland. Songs of fancy and fairyland are these. Amid the romance and glamour of youth, the maid and lover sing of the story that never grows old. Songs of hope and promise are these. In middle age the husband and wife sing of home. Songs of comfort and contentment are these. In declining years the songs of childhood bring fond memories. Songs of retrospection are these. And when we come to that sunset hour, the organ and choir speak of life eternal, of peace beyond in the Everlasting Arms of Him whose birth over nineteen hundred years ago brought the angles' music to earth.

By VINCENT MURPHY

THE glacier was very kind to the Red River Valley. It slid majestically down from the north and sat awhile in the middle of the Red River, blocking it and causing the formation of Lake Agassiz. When the glacier retreated and the water receded, an old lake bottom was left of fine soil almost as sticky as taffy when wet, but fertile and most easily cultivated.

This was the land that our forefathers found. They built their shacks and with oxen broke up small plots. They literally "tickled the soil and it laughed with the harvest. "They were satisfied with comparatively small farms because the bountiful yield and the high prices afforded them a good living.

They had time to do things other than farming. They worked hard but they did not to work at a feverish pitch. Our forefathers would never think of working on Sunday; nor would they work beyond a certain hour at night. Their Sundays and evening were spent in visiting each other.

On such occasions the whole family would climb in the double buggy and journey to the neighboring farm. They would be enthusiastically met by barking dogs and a host of children who could hardly wait for the occupants to climb out of the buggy to greet them. The elders would then go inside, the women going in the kitchen to lean on the kitchen range and talk in perfect domesticity. The men would sit in the parlor, light their pipes and talk about the day's problems. Sometimes they would stroll outside to examine a piece of machinery, look at a field, or nonchalantly kick in the dirt to test the moisture.

Our so-called pioneers were not absolved from hardships. They experienced more physical difficulties than the farmers of today. But they approached their troubles with a serenity and calmness. They regarded their farms as homes; not as a place to get rich quick. They meant that their sons should be farmers; they planned for the future and were willing to take time out from their routine work to build for that future.

This is not a condemnation of the farmers of today; it is only a contrast. These pioneers did not yearn for things they could not have; they lived within their means and the result was a balanced life.

But these days were not to last long. Soon the Red River Valley gained a reputation as a great wheat-raising area. More settlers came and the price of land rose. With the rising price of land, grain prices also "boomed." Men, lured by the lust of making money, ruthlessly broke up virgin soil and planted it to wheat.

Aided by the extensive use of machinery, farmers tried to see how much land they could farm. When the soil became sufficiently porous, plowing was omitted. Farmers would go over their land twice a year—once in the spring with a broadcast seeder, and in the fall with a harvester. A virtual gold rush occured. Men suddenly realized that wheat was gold. No one bothered with small details. They circled their fields, not stopping to cut corners or backswaths. The War declared in 1917 brought even higher prices! "Adventurers" made money and left the country. Conservative farmers made money too. but they invested it in high-priced land. The "boom period" culminated in 1918. In the following years, the end of the war and a series of drouths caused a depression.

Today in the Red River Valley, there is little virgin soil left. The broad prairie that was once a sea of nodding grasses is now a veritable mixture. Drouth, lack of rotation, and lack of fertilization has caused much of the soil to become alkaline. Some of the land nearest the river has remained rich and black; but at the edge of the valley, land that never was suitable for farming has grown up to weeds. This mixture of weeds and underbrush furnishes a haven for grasshoppers to breed. In dry years a furious wind turns the valley into a dust bowl. We are paying the price for the "adventurers" of the early nincteen hundreds.

The gold strike is over but the fever still persists. I know one German farmer who says, "Big figgers make big farmers. We got to cover much land and raise much grain to make money. We got to buy good machinery in order to farm good. We got to borrow money in order to make money."

He spends the periods between threshing and freezing time bailing hay and straw. In the spring, he runs two tractors day and night, discing and seeding. Farmers of this type regard their tractors and machinery as toys. They think it fun to hitch their tractor on a load of hay and go fifteen miles an hour.

Their conversation runs, "That tractor of mine certainly has power.——I've already put a thousand miles on that new "pick-up" of mine."

These farmers have adopted a doubtful economic philosophy. They buy automobiles and machinery on the installment plan; amortized loans are at their disposal. They raise large quantities of oats that they cannot feed their tractors. They buy "puffed rice" for breakfast.

Not all the farmers are "big figgerers". Some of them are still struggling along, using horses. They usually live on land owned by insurance companies or the government. Their expenses are less but their profits are also less. They struggle valiantly with Russian thistles and dust storms. They get small pleasure from "second-hand" automobiles but their life is one of drudgery.

"Wit nothing to look forward to
with hope,
And nothing to lok backward to
with pride."

The social life of both types of farmers has changed. If one of them should happen to drive in another's yard in the evening. he might be greeted with, "What's on your mind, Bill? How'd you happen to come over?"

They do not think of making a call merely for the sake of visiting. Gone is the old-time sociability and hospitality. Housewives would rather listen to their radios or go to a moving picture. Young and old no longer mingle at country dances. The older people are too tired and too pressed for time and the young people drive to the city to do their dancing. The farms of these men are not their servants. They are the servants of the farms. They are little better off than the proverbial "Man With the Hoe".

And yet they are not unhappy. The farmer's standard of living has been raised; they have more comforts and are better educated than their ancestors. They are perhaps more intelligent than the pioneers. But still there is something in the Red River Valley? Farmers do lacking.

How many beautiful farms are there not have time to beautify their homes. They are too busy searching for something they cannot find. They do not regard their farms as homes; they regard them as investments, just as they do their machinery.

And still the typical farmer of the Red River Valley is to be admired rather than to be railed at. There is no one as naively hopeful as he. If his crop is destroyed, he borrows money to re-seed. He not only lives on the earth; he lives in the earth—the muck, the grime, the manure. They are his to form into a livelihood. He lives next to the things that poets praise, but he seldom sees them. He doesn't whimper; nor does he postpone. He "plugs" dispassionately day after day, and rarely thinks of changing occupations.——If only he would remember "that bigg figgers do not make big farmers."

That "Awe-ful" Afternoon

By CLEO SPRINGER

IT WAS a hot, uncomfortable day, and I was ill at ease in my hard-backed fourth grade desk. Herbert was sitting behind me. I liked him, then. I turned around.

"My middle name is Ardell. What's yours?"

"Clayton."

"Oh, I love that for a—"

"Cleo! it was Miss Beach) will you quit whispering and turn around! This is Arithmetic class."

I never did like her. She wore cotton bloomers that extended below her knees; and when we had calisthenics, the effect was ridiculous and mirth-provoking. To me she was an ogre with her straight black hair, buck teeth, and horn-rimmed spectacles. I turned around.

Long division was very boring; but there was a robin on a tree by the window. I wondered if Herbert wished by robins wetting his thumb. I half-way turned around.

"Cleo, you can come up and stand in front of the class."

I hadn't whispered. I was angry with all the emotion that outraged childhood could muster. I stood up in front of the class. Before me were what seemed a mist of jeering, mirthful faces. Herbert, of course, was sympathetic (or so I thought then). Being naturally impatient, the punishment was becoming more than I could bear. I had to do something or I would scream. I looked at Miss Beach standing there stern and unmoved. I hated her. I hated everybody. Should I? I did. I stuck out my venomous tongue at her in honest contempt. It was her turn to be angry then—and she was not the kind to pass up an opportunity.

"Cleo, go out and stand in the hall until school is out." This was screeched at me. My "dander" was up.

"No, I won't!"

She dragged me out. There I stood in humiliation and degradation thinking woeful thoughts of what the "kids" would say. More appalling was the thought of what Mother would DO if anyone told her about it. (I wouldn't). Every time a student came down the hall, I, because of my pride would pretend to be taking a drink. As the afternoon wore on, I was sure I would never drink water for a long, long time. To top what I thought was the worst afternoon anyone could endure, I got a nosebleed—which only added to my misery. I thought of myself as a heroic mortal being persecuted for a great cause—but the practical and unkind present was too immediate to be forgotten. I was worrying.

School finally let out.

"Are you ready to apologize?" Miss Beach demanded.

"No," I said.

"You stay after school until you do."

This was too much. I knew if I had to be in her presence much longer I'd scream or do something terrible. In the lattest voice possible I said—

"I'm sorry."

I wasn't.

The "kids" very kindly waited for me outside. I was notorious (notice I said notorious).

"How did you dare?"

"What will your mother say?"

These were only a few of the statements that were awesomely hurled at me. I was suffering it in heroic silence. My heart was too full for words.

That night, when I said my prayers, I added—"And please God make some poor man marry Miss Beach so we won't have her for a teacher anymore—and please God don't let Ma find out. Amen."

The Ulirato - -

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cupine wadling along the corduroy, or in catching sight of a black and white skunk padding about with feline ease. Strikingly unusual is the sight of a car in this wilderness, however. A car will send the spindly Polish children, who hike across the bog in search of cows, scurrying into the bushes like a herd of terrified fawns. There they will remain, with large, dark eyes staring through the bushes until the last rattle of the discomforted vehicle had faded into the tance.

Now it is thick night in the woods, dark as swamp ooze. Once within the forest, you might be able to distinguish the naked birches from the balsam and spruce, but I should be the last one to venture into the strange arms of this night. The only tokens of the outer world are the descendants of one-time barn cats which strayed into the Ulirato and became part of it. They are larger, more muscular and thick-furred than the limp fluffs commonly known as cats. Their ears have been frozen off at the tips; they will fight like their brother wildcat if cornered; and their hoarse yowls cause devil-inspired quakings in the hearts of the lone travelers at night.

Grudgingly, the night gives way to us as we return across the bridge and plod up the hill to our cabin, which crouches on the edge of this lost country. The frogs are clocking, some like knee-deep buglers, some trolling in pompous martial measure. Tree toads are skree-ing. The mucky little ditch is running away in quest of high adventure. The pines are soughing vespers to an uncouth god. A wolf is howling to his mate. This is the silence of noise; this is night without peace; this is the Ulirato.

Interest

By HAZEL BRIGHT

YOUTH sits at the feet
Of learning, toward the teacher
Eager faces turning.
The teacher feels the interest and
Goes on with his tale of evolution
And loss of toes, but the eager
Students' eyes are on the wall watching
A fly, not on evolution at all.

Aspiration

By Marjory Houge

I FEEL words beating in my brain
Struggling fiercely to be freed,
Struggling to become a poem—
Verses bending as a reed
To the wind of each emotion,
To each bit of joy or pain,
Telling of death's deep despairing
Or the silver of the rain.
Still they struggle, still attempting
To portray my inmost heart.
Never quite succeeding—waiting
'Til the year's have done their part.

Was Peter Pan Right?

By MARJORIE STRAND

THERE is a well-known saying that a person is young as long as he thinks in terms of the future; but as soon as age begins to overtake him his thoughts turn to the past, and he becomes lost in reveries of that glorious day called youth. I must admit that my experience and years have not reached the point where I can place myself in the latter category. But even now just at the beginning of the tihrd decade of my life an occasional glance at the past is refreshing and tinged by time with enchantment.

Time brings many changes, and, as I look back over my childhood, some of them loom up in my consciousness. Children have come to be more or less a burden, or something to be left with the little girl next door while parents go out for their Saturday night entertainment. This was not true in the dim past when I was a child, at least not in our home.

The town in which I spent the early years of my life was also the home of many relatives, and it had become almost a tradition for the "clan", those within commuting distance, and sometimes a few close friends to gather several times each winter at my grandfather's country home for a party which was planned for the entertainment of both young and old. On special occasions such as Thanksgiving Day and Christmas the festivities often began at noon with a large dinner and continued until far into the night. The first Santa Claus I can recall was Aunt Edith, clothed in a red suit and white beard and enlarged with numerous pillows.

One such incident especially stands out clearly in my memory. It was New Year's Eve, and at seven-thirty we were bundled in an endless assortment of coats, scarves, mittens, and caps and waiting impatiently for our transportation to arrive. This consisted of a conveyance which was a wagon in summer but which had been converted into a sleigh by removing the wheels and replacing them with runners.

At last it appeared, driven by my favorite uncle, a young and carefree chap who was always the life of the party; and we scrambled in, anxious to be on our way and tingling with energy from the frosty air. Snuggled down among an array of blankets and robes, in utter darkness, and with no sound to be heard but a murmur of voices and the creaking of steel on the hard-packed snow, it was easy for a seven-year-old mind to live in imagination a thousand tales of adventure. I was soon floating far away on a magic carpet of day dreams.

Too soon the journey was over, but the welcoming light streaming through an open door is a not unwelcome sight when toes and fingers are beginning to ache from the cold. The sound of laughter and music from within added to the delight of anticipation, and I covered the distance between sleigh and house with one leap.

Inside I peered cautiously about, for I was a shy child even among friends if there were enough of them, and one never could tell when a strange face might loom up among the familiar ones. But no such calamity presented itself, so I entered bravely and removed my wraps, which were carried by a watchful aunt to a bedroom in some far corner of the house. Now the fun would begin.

My elders, for whom the evening was still young and who for some reason I could not understand were able to stay awake past the unearthly hour of ten, were content yet to sit and talk—but not we children! I was not blessed with a countless number of cousins, but there were enough of us to be under the feet of all the grown ups. For two hours we scrambled over the floor, playing tag and getting in the way of our parents, who soon tired of inaction, and to the accompaniment of piano and violin had begun to dance. It was fun but rather confusing to be included for a few minutes in a square dance.

By nine-thirty our steps had become slow, and we were content to huddle together on the couch or to curl up in the corner of a big chair from which it was possible to view the dancers without exertion. The very young children had fallen asleep and were carefully conveyed to an upper room where their slumber would be undisturbed by the merriment. Then we were huddled into the kitchen, where we found waiting a feast of chicken sandwiches, cake and milk. This expected, but no less delightful, treat did not increase my alertness, and after resuming my place on the couch my eyes, which had become increasingly difficult to keep open, must eventually have closed as I drifted into oblivion. My contemporaries, also being overcome by sleep, had been induced one by one to join the ever-growing throng upstairs. My mother, after several fruitless attempts to convince me of the wisdom of such an act, had given up and I was permitted to resume my slumber unmolested.

After what seemed many hours, during which time I had wakened and slept again many times, I became suddenly wide awake, and rubbing my eyes, stared about me in bewilderment. Everyone was laughing and calling to one another, and upon noticing that I was awake someone informed me that the New Year was here. I pulled the curtain away from the window and peered out into the blackness of night, but I could see no little New Year passing by; although I did hear his whistle. How could someone so young know that there are no fairies, that New Year's is only a mark of the passage of time, and that the whistles I heard were not blown by a New Year child, but carried through the clear, cold air from the nearby town? Why must age creep upon us and destroy belief, and why does realization result in sophistication and hardness? I cannot answer that question. I am aware of the fact that there are some people who never grow old and who, through the aid of an active imagination and an open mind have retained the expectancy and glow of youth through a life of ninety long years.

At some time during the wee small hours I was half dragged, half carried out to the waiting sleigh. and to the tune of tinkling bells and the rhythm of horses' hoofs we sped over the glistening whiteness toward home and bed.

High On A Hill

By CONSTANCE HALL

THE HILLS have set me free again,
And loosed the bruising fretwork on my heart.
The trees, with green frills bursting,
Clothe my fears.
The ice floes rocketting and skirling,
Are brave for things undreamed.
The birds are bubbling with the same song
Which all but breaks my heart,
Because I love April
And everybody!
And the hills have set me free.

A Phantom

By CAROL RAFF

A FIGURE
In the darkeness seems to move.
I catch my breath
And wait.
I must not take one step
For fear I'll make a sound.
Then silently it stirs again—
This time I see it's governed
From above.

At last my fright is gone.
'Twas just the airway beacon light!

Regret At Autumn's Passing

By VIRGINA MURRAY

DARK threat of snow
Is on the air,
And heathen hordes of fallen leaves
Swarm brown across the earth which was so fair.
Their wretched, dried, and lonely ghosts cling to each branch
To chant weird notes against a frozen breeze . . .
How I shall miss the soft, cool song
Of wind in trees
When some rough blast that lingering few
Does sever.
Tonight may be the last they'll sing to me this year.
Perhaps, forever . . .

Mildew Sonata

A ROOM in Mildew, a radio, a pipe,
And thou beside me in my dreams,
thy face enframed in smoke rings.
Wind, snow, rain—they mean naught to me.

A balanced college life,
No fear of my existence; NYA takes care of that,
No need to study; the term is just beginning.

Ah, if it could be thus—
Instead, thirteen rooms in Mildew,
Ten radios, each jangling a different tune,
A pipe that will not light, and rings that will not form,
Not thou, but twenty other in my dreams.
NYA, it has been cut; I may not eat tomorrow.
—A balanced college life!

To Lee

By CLEO SPRINGER

PRICELESS gifts—
God gives them all
Precious babies, sweet and small—
And for the ones
He knew deserved
The best of babies, He reserved
Lee.

Wondrous child,
He's your alone
Such happiness you'd never known
Until he came
This little son;
The best of babies, Who's the one?
Lee.

To A Friend

By MARGARET MOFFITT

SERENE as all the beauties of the night
Stil as the voice of God within the soul
Your quiet face came softly to my sight
And peace o'er all my troubled senses stole.

The Engagement

By MAXINE HEADLAND

THE dainty white curtains at the open windows of the room moved slightly, stirred by a summer breeze, as Juliet sat at her dressing table making the final touches to her appearance. The face reflected in the mirror was of more than ordinary beauty. The well-formed features were gracefully framed by dark hair, forming a striking contrast with the pallor of her beautiful face. The beauty of her face and form, as if to make the perfect more perfect, was enhanced by that indescribable element that is the result partly of training and partly of natural inheritance, and is usually designated as charm.

Once again Juliet lightly powdered her face and painstakingly retouched her lips. Following this, she carefully adjusted each curl into place. As she took her fingers away, one curl fell loosely down. Again she combed it, this time with success. Arising, she surveyed her appearance in the full length mirror. Her maroon-colored chiffon afternoon dress was a wise choice; it was proper and contributed to her charm. The dress also important for an occasion such as this when she had determined to appear her best. She smiled, recalling the first time she had met John Hender. It was just after Sunday School one Sunday when she was about ten years old, and she was wearing a favorite red dress. How time does fly, she sighed.

The ivory time-piece on the dressing table told her there would be but a minute before the taxi would arrive, and, to be sure, as she was adjusting her maroon-colored toque, the rude honk sounded outside. While reaching for her purse and gloves, her eyes fell on Ronald's picture. What a dear he is, she thought.

Mother was not to be seen as she hurried downstairs and outside into the waiting taxi. Once inside. she scolded herself for her haste; it was imperative that she remain calm and keep her poise for this particular engagement. Yet, glancing at her watch, she noticed that her hand was trembling. She frowned. That was ridiculous. No matter how hard she had tried, nor how long she had planned to make this important event in her life perfect, her hand would still tremble. What would Ronald think? He must never know.

"Here you are, Miss," the Irish brogue of the taxi-driver announced as he opened the door of the taxi.

Stepping out, Juliet glanced up at the two-story brick building in front of her. There was nothing distinctive to be seen about it. Second floor he had said, and, gathering her courage, she threw back her shoulders and bravely marched up to the door which evidently led to the second floor. At the top of the stairs, the doors were all open to allow the breezes to blow through the rooms.

A dark-haired woman greeted her.

"Miss Juliet?"

She nooded.

"Mr. Deland is expecting you. I will tell him you are here," she smiled, and turned away.

Juliet looked around the room which she had entered; it was tastefully furnished in rather dark rich colors. The atmosphere was one of refinement, almost luxurious.

She sat down in one of the armchairs, and her thoughts naturally turned to the events which would soon follow. She must be somewhat reserved—that was always wise, and she must not smile too much. She sighed. and tried to shake off the increasing tenseness. Annoyed, she saw that her hands were trembling again.

A side door opened, and a middle-aged man walked into the room.

"Well, Miss Juliet," he beamed, "all ready to have your picture taken? Come right in. Well, well, last time you were here you were still in the grades. How you have grown! Why you are a young lady now—a junior in high school, aren't you, and your brother, Ronald, is graduating this year, isn't he? Does he still tease you as much as ever?"

"More," she answered, and both laughed pleasantly.

Great Men

By CLEO SPRINGER

POETS, Philosophers, Preachers
Explain
Expound
Confound—Life!
Fools we are,
For while we look at life
And think we know its depths;
Life looks back at us
And laughs
For life knows us.

Chico's Song - -

From Page 1

them. But never would Chico stoop to playing the popular "trash"; Maria had loved the classics.

Some called Chico a good-for-nothing, a vagabond, because he played his accordian for the people on the streets; because he earned his living from the pennies and nickels they threw him in appreciation. They did not understand that music was his whole life, and they did not realize what it meant to be without sight. But more than anything else, how could they know how much little Toni was to him; why, without Toni—Toni of the golden hair and the golden voice—Chico's life would be an empty shell. Verdi need never have composed a thing of beauty.

One day Chico, with his accordian slung over his shoulders, and Toni beside him holding his hand to guide him along the familiar streets, started out as usual to play for the crowds. New York's Italian section was a busy place; vendors with their push-carts containing vegetables, flowers, and fruits, intermingled with the heavier traffic of the rumbling trucks and restless automobiles. At the intersection Toni and Chico started across the street; suddenly the lights changed and a high-powered car shot forward like a comet. Toni, halfway across the street, screamed and pushed Chico with all the strength her little arms could muster. Auto brakes screeched, a lady screamed, and bedlam broke loose among the onlookers. Toni's body lay on the pavement, and Chico, sensing what had happened, knelt beside her in wild agony. As they carried her away in the ambulance, someone told Chico it was all right, that she was still alive and had a chance to live. The blind man collapsed.

For weeks Chico lived in a torment, for he became strangely ill, and could not leave his bed. They said he would never recover from the shock, but Chico knew that if he could hear Toni's voice it would be all right. They told him she was getting better, that soon she would be well enough to come and see him.

The weeks passed, and Toni came again to Chico. There was a change in her; she had lost a part of that certain vitality, but her voice—her glorious voice—was the same. It seemed to Chico that it was even richer, fuller, and more beautiful than ever before.

As Chico became stronger he was able to leave his bed, and it was not long before he was on the street again, playing as before; but no, not quite as before. The tunes took on a slower tempo, a more somber tone. And Toni still sang, but the song held a note of sadness. New York's Italy noted the change, and murmured, "Chico's getting old; da shock never left heem—soon he, too, weel be gone."

And somehow the time came soon when Chico could not play in the streets any longer. He was not too old — not by years—but he was too tired all the time. His accordian stood idle in the corner, and only the echoes of "Il Trovatore" and "Rigoletto" lingered in the streets.

Chico lay on his bed for days. Toni was singing the songs he loved, but why was her voice so sad? Toni was never sad.

Then in the twilight of a quiet evening as Toni sat by Chico's side he quietly said, "Toni, always seeng—something from the masters." And Chico never knew that Toni had been killed by the car that day.

Lost: The Story Book Hour - -

From Page 1

tomary book cases, to be met only by small, handsome, hand-painted, neatly arranged magazine racks.

The love for books, for the reading of them, is an art,—an undeniable art which must be carefully and tactfully cultivated—gradually developed. And the home is the proper place for this. It is the natural place of development. To be sure, the school, too, plays its part, but merely as an accessory agent in the process. Home with its sanctity, its quiet, its peace, is the natural embryo for the birth of this art as well as that of any of the other fine arts of living.

In fact, I sometimes find myself inclined to believe that our schools of today do more harm than good in fostering a taste for the better books. Our English courses with their standard outside reading requirements,—this week a book of adventure, next, an autobiography, well-planned book reports, painstakingly written or given as oral reports before sleepy, disinterested class members and half-hearted teachers,—these are enough in themselves to form a sharp barrier between the student and further quest of good literature. Unless, of course, that gap is filled by a proper home environment, including good reading habits, the delight of private ownership, pride in establishing a personal library, watching one's own grow from year to year.

Undoubtedly, it is a consequence of our present age—this seeming decline of the reading of good books for the love of those books, for the gradual disappearance of the family story-book hour. There is no longer time for it in a day already too crammed with activities. Youngsters no longer have the time to spend each evening at home, enjoying the adventures of Huck Finn, or penetrating the jungles with Kipling. Or when they find the time, they are too tired to listen. On the other hand, the mothers are too occupied to give any of their own time—too busy preparing a paper on "Problems of the Modern Mother" for circle C of the Child Psychology Society, or entertaining the members of the Library Club.

It is a deplorable and pitiful fact, this cheating our children of the most pleasant and lasting memories of childhood, their rightful heritage, for a desire for reading is an essential part of everyone's life. A good book possesses the same power as music—the power of transformation into strange delightful worlds and unseen mysteries. Worthy books serve not only as companions, but as solitudes.

No, I do not believe that I am too sentimental about these childhood memories. They have become a part of me. Well and good, and may they ever be a part of me—a close part which will never be lost.

It's All So Easy

By DORIS MARTIN

UNLIKE every fledging artist of the pen, chewed up pencil or 1909 model typewriter cliche, I have no ambitions of writing the great American novel. To see my name in bold print on the title page of some sensational piece of work "right off the press", yes, of course, that would be nice, I've thought. And to be sure, some of my book length characters have become quite real to me—after an hour or two of delightful imagining—but, crystallized into flowing script, they undergo the most dreadful metamorphosis.

In about the middle of my first hopeful chapter, as I read it over to myself, someone of them—and the last time, I regret to add, it was my wistful blue-eyed heroine with the Mona Lisa smile—someone always walks right out of my ultra-modern setting, flings himself ungracefully into an old family why-don't-you-burn-it heirloom and laughs. Heartily he laughs —(no, that is too polite a word) laughs outrageously, I should say, at the other too splendid characters too sweetly and completely psycho-analyzed by me. One rash sweep of my hand—and there you have it—more waste paper.

So I gave all that up. But all geniuses have jottings of future topics, I thought. Why couldn't I begin now? There is a great future in essays, I reflected. A well-kept notebook of my daily philosophical ramblings—and I could outramble Montaigne to a glorious fame. For years I have believed that I acted the part of one dedicated to the Cause. I have even imagined that I looked excitingly exotic (disheveled hair, shiny nose, far-away look, you know) as a Great Writer must look. And the back of my notebook did seem to become pleasingly full. I thought I was putting into writing pleasant daily happenings and doing this in pages goodly sprinkled with short and very modern verses.

Candidly, I do believe I should stop here. Into the secretmost corners of your mind may have sprung a tiny seedling of ambition, because someone else who wanted to write had found a simple, sensible beginning.

Morals to stories, however, are quite profitable, I always believe, though there will always be Jo March's and boys who play with beans. For the truth is this—my notebook met the crucial test immediately after I read the notice. "active members will read original compositions".

Through its ink-splotted pages I then paged jovially, anxiously, vainly. For one of my best pages had degenerated into a reminder page typical of any student—pay bills—meeting at four — reference page so and so, together with the author and title both mispelled to the point of unintelligibility—a Christmas shopping list with checks by only two items—and ad infinitum. Another one—a more literary page I thought—included an elegy on the hardness and thus economy of horehound, some mundane questions phrased in Shakespearian prithees and how nows, cozily surrounded by one unsolved logarithm (dishevelled hair—how simply obtained!) and ad nauseum.

Going Home

By ART GROVE

SILENTLY closes the day—silently creeps
Within a wearied world a quieting hand.
Where once did passion rule, sweet peace now keeps
The burden that once the soul could only stand.

Silently closes the day—quietly dreams
A wounded soul of days ill spent,
Of hours too short. Now, much that seems
Uncertain, yesterday, to eyes undimmed, went

By as facts that only life could prove
Or fail to prove, and we, we dared him not.
All memory—all dreams. I cannot move.
Undisturbed by men I find my cot.

Silently closes my day. I bow my head,
For I, too, must walk soon among the dead.

Smoke On The Hills

By JEAN WALKER

(Based on True Incident)

THE early autumn evening was hot and dry. The air, heavy and blue with smoke, hung over the little cabin on the hillside. A half-mile away hot tongues of flame, not content with consuming trees alone, reached up to lick the cloudless sky. The breeze chased the fire over hill and valley toward the little cabin.

Inside the rude shack two boys stood at the window, one of them holding a baby. The oldest boy, about sixteen, looked at the red sky and wondered if his father would be back in time. They had first noticed the flames about an hour before. Under their very eyes the fire had seemed to leap and spring high into the air like a living thing. Parker, the father, had known at once that the fire was out of control. Very quietly he had told the sick mother and the boys to wait for him while he went to the nearest neighbor, four miles away, to try to borrow a car or a team of horses. It was then that the family had realized their great danger.

The crying of the baby broke through Tom's thoughts. The boy bent over the child, juggling her softly and murmuring to her, trying to calm her. He glanced rather anxiously at his mother. who was becoming more and more nervous. Suddenly she dropped her work and came over to the window.

"Is it comin' any nearer?" she asked, her voice shaking a little.

The boys didn't answer for a moment; then Jim, the ten-year-old, cried out, "Ysh! Yeh, Ma, it's comin' nearer fast!" His voice rose to a shriek. "I'm scared, Ma; I'm scared" and he turned to her and pressed his face against her sleeve.

Tom turned fiercely to his brother, "Shut up, you little coward! Can't you see that Ma——"

But the mother intervened shakily, "Don't talk that way to him, Tom. It ain't his fault if he's scared. I—I'm scared, too! Oh, God. God!" her harsh voice shook horribly. "Do you suppose Pa'll get here in time, Tom? Tom, look at that fire! It's comin' closer, Tom. Oh, Tom——" her voice ended in a wail, and she sank to the floor where she sat, pressing a trembling white fist hard against her teeth, to keep from crying out.

Tom put the baby on a chair and kneeled beside his mother. "Don't take on so, Ma; Pa'll be here any minute now, and he'll bring a car or a team of horses to take us away from here. Don't Ma! Don't cry!"

Jim had buried his hed in his mother's lap; now he arose to look out the window.

"Look at the fire!" he screamed. "We're gonna be burnt up, Ma. Ma, let's go! Don't let's stay here " He tugged at the woman's arm. "Let's go and find Pa!"

Tom thought desperately, "I can't stand this noise. I—I can't stand this. I've gotta do something!" It seemed to him that he could feel the heat of the flames against his body, that his whole being was suffocated in smoke. "Maybe we'd better go," he said. "Let's start off down the road." He lifted up his mother's half-fainting body. Then suddenly he listened a moment. "It's Pa!" he cried. "Pa's come back with a car!"

Tears ran down Tom's cheeks as he helped Jim into the back of the truck. It seemed to him that already the air was clearer and sweeter. Although the flames were almost to the clearing, he laughed at them and cried, "You can have this house, fire. We can build a better one—yeah, we'll build a better one!"